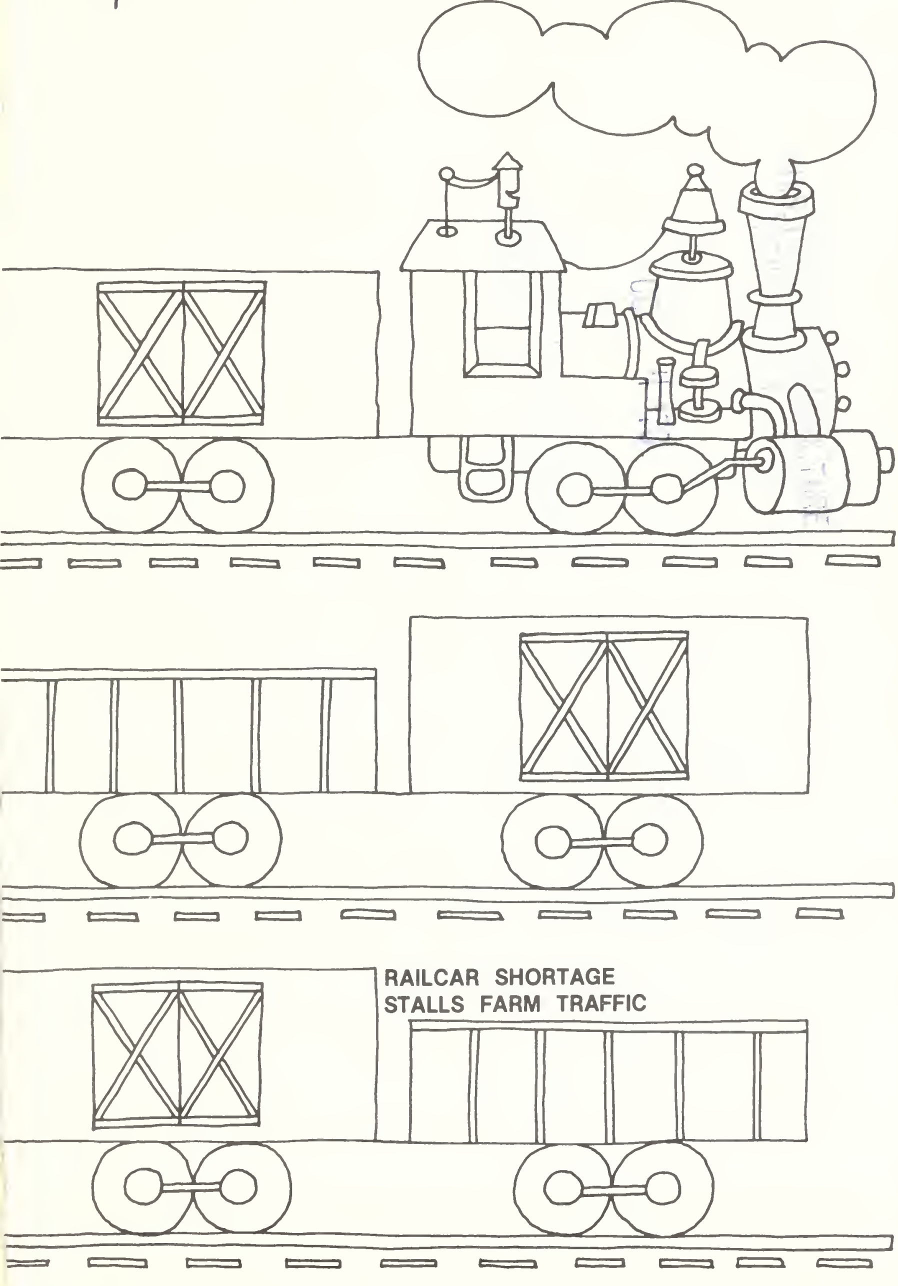
agricultural situation

THE CROP REPORTERS MAGAZINE
ECONOMICS, STATISTICS, AND COOPERATIVES SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



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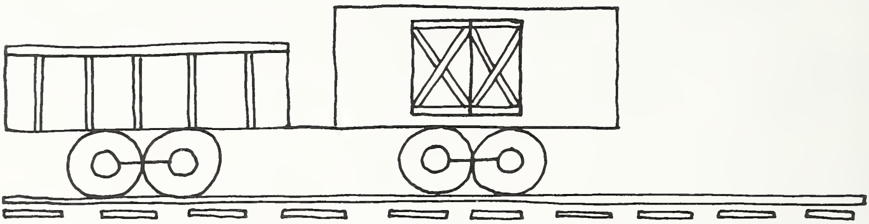


Keeping farm-to-market shipments on track in the months ahead will continue to test the Nation's railroads.

Cited as the "worst in history" by Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland, the railcar shortage that developed earlier this year is not likely to slacken at least through early 1979.

What had been a 705-car surplus of covered grain hoppers in mid-1977 slumped to a daily shortage of almost 24,000 units this June. At one time in April, shippers were searching for an additional 37,000 hoppers and 6,000 boxcars daily. Cotton stocks were stacked 2 months deep because of insufficient rail transportation.

Even if the necessary cars were on hand, there aren't enough locomotives to handle the boost in farm product movements and still meet the day-to-day needs of other sectors of the economy.

A sequence of agricultural and economic events created the current condition and may stall attempts for a quick solution.

High production levels for wheat, feed grains, soybeans, and some other items during the past couple of years filled farm and local storage facilities. Market demand was not energetic enough to trim supplies; prices softened.

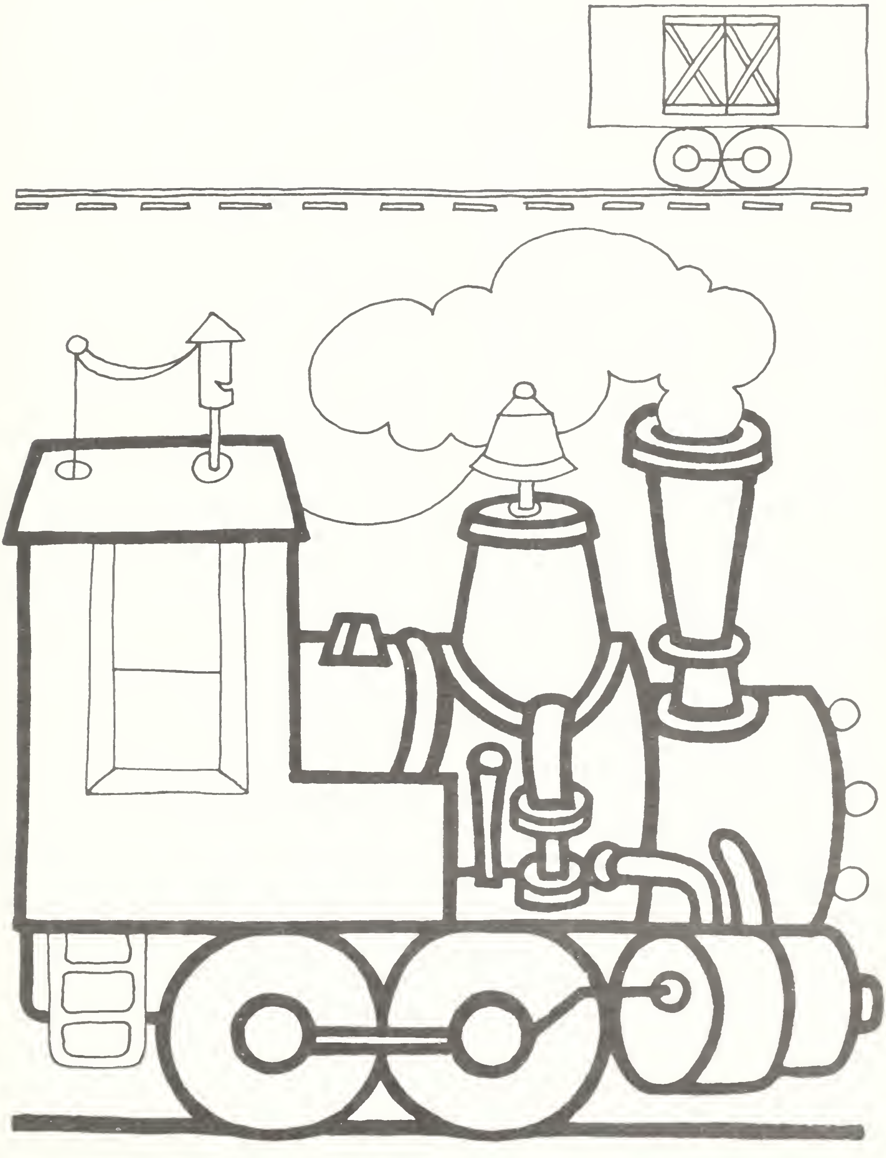
Then in late 1977 prices began to improve with healthier foreign call for U.S. products and the development of the farmer-owned grain reserve.

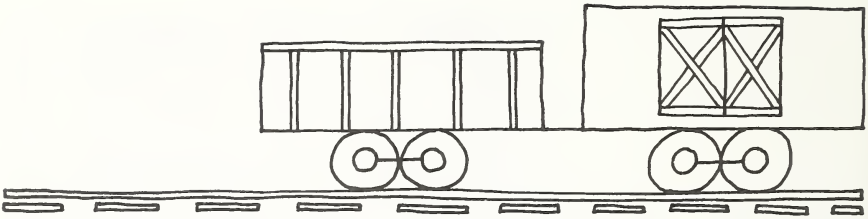
Farmers needed to sell their backed-up grains and make room for the 1978 crops. However, the rush to market caught some local grain dealers in a pinch between rapidly unloading farm trucks and the lack of railcars, a situation that may undercut producers' prices.

Usually dealers rely on a line of credit to create funds to pay farmers for grain which is moved on to larger buyers at a profit. But without cars to get crops to ports or domestic processors, dealers are out cash and face possible late charges on shipments contracted for delivery on certain dates. The estimated loss to dealers is 10 cents a bushel, which could be clipped from farmers' checks.

The surge of selling is traceable to rising foreign use outstripping production and the added stimulation from the declining dollar value abroad which makes U.S. farm products cheaper in some countries.

There's been a lot of beans on the





move. This is expected to continue as farmers seeded a record 64.4 million acres that could mean a harvest of 1.77 billion bushels, compared with last year's 1.72 billion. The domestic crush for the whole season ending this summer may hit a new high of 935 million bushels, up from the 790 million crushed during the 1976/77 season.

The United States will be the only major producer-exporter of beans this fall since Brazil's 1978 crop was devastated by a severe frost; consequently, our exports are projected to reach 700 million bushels against last year's 564.

Foreign buyers are expected to rebuild dwindling wheat supplies with purchases of 950 to 1,200 million bushels from the United States, about the same range as in 1977/78. Domestic use, always steady, should claim 685 to 805 million bushels. This activity in the face of a crop 10 percent less than last year will serve to draw down surplus levels.

The 1978 corn crop will again be ample to meet the needs of foreign purchasers. The current view is for a record 6.5 billion bushels, up 2 percent from 1977.

The U.S. share of world corn exports has climbed from 44 percent in 1970/71 to over 70 percent in recent years. The world bought about 1.7 billion bushels of U.S. corn in each of the previous 3 years—more than a fourth of the annual crop. The expectation is that 1.8 billion bushels will be hoisted on ships in 1978/79.

Although farmers have cut back on the other feed grains; barley down 1 percent, oats 15 percent, and sorghum 10 percent, the United States will still meet its traditional obligation of producing 25 to 30 percent of the world's feed grain exports.

The export picture is brightened by prospects of a $25-26 billion sales glow this year, topping the previous high of $24 billion set last year.

In an attempt to alleviate the transportation bind for farm products, Secretary Bergland set up a "hotline", so shippers, trade associations, and grain elevator operators can alert USDA to serious railcar shortages. The number to call is (202) 447-6794 between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Washington, D.C., time. The information is immediately relayed to the Interstate Commerce Commission, which uses it in recommending actions to railroad companies for supplying cars.

U.S. SOYBEANS SELL BIG IN LATIN AMERICA

Though the U.S. soybean crop is forecast at a record 1.77 billion bushels this year, demand for American beans will probably remain strong well into next spring.

Brazil, the leading competitor for soybean markets, has been virtually knocked out of the running by a severe drought that's reduced the 1978 crop by over 2 million tons.

This, of course, opens more doors for U.S. soybeans, not only around the world—but right in Brazil's own backyard. Moreover, it appears the United States could maintain a flourishing soybean market in Latin America, even after Brazil's back on its feet, and despite the presence of two other large suppliers—Argentina and Paraguay.

One projection calls for at least a 50-percent rise in shipments of U.S. soybeans and meal to the region over the next 5 years to fill the needs of an emerging meat industry. Rising incomes, population pressures, and efforts to improve protein-poor diets have triggered a virtual meat boom throughout Latin America.

Mexico, the region's biggest market for U.S. beans, upped its per capita use of pork by more than 60 percent during the first half of the seventies, a feat it hopes to match in the second half. This will require tremendous livestock industry expansion, and push demand for soybean meal well beyond the country's capacity to produce it.

Peru, No. 2 market, has found it can save money by importing U.S. soybeans and selling its higher priced fishmeal on the world market. If No. 3 customer, Venezuela, drops certain restrictive import policies, U.S. sales to that country could climb sharply.

These and a number of other Latin nations are increasing their poultry output by about 8-10-percent a year. While swine production has grown at a slower pace, Mexico, Panama, and the Dominican Republic are moving rapidly toward larger output from modern production facilities. Demand for soybean meal will surge as these operations begin using more scientifically formulated feed.

Among the Caribbean countries, lack of domestic oilseed production and closeness to the United States have led to substantial soybean markets for U.S. products. New crushing facilities going up in a number of countries point to continued growth. Several Central American nations import sizable volumes of soybean meal, and except for Panama, buy almost exclusively from the United States.

The three nations that compete most directly with the United States for soybean markets—Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay—also will feel increased pressure to keep more soybean meal for domestic use, a situation that should favor U.S. exporters.

Other reasons for optimism. . .

Latin American suppliers can't deliver to certain parts of the region as cheaply as the United States can. Soybeans produced in southern Brazil must travel a roundabout route to reach west coast markets.

Argentina and Paraguay can't compete with U.S. prices in Latin America's northern markets and barely beat U.S. rates in nearby Peru and Chile.

Few other Latin nations appear ready to enter the soybean export business or even approach self-sufficiency in oilseeds. Efforts to expand production in several countries have brought only mixed results. Also, the relatively low world price of soybeans tends to favor U.S. growers, who can generally produce them at a smaller cost.

FARM HIREES MAINLY YOUNG WHITE MALES

More than half of the people in the hired farm labor force in a recent year had no other source of earnings and worked for an average of less than $2,200.

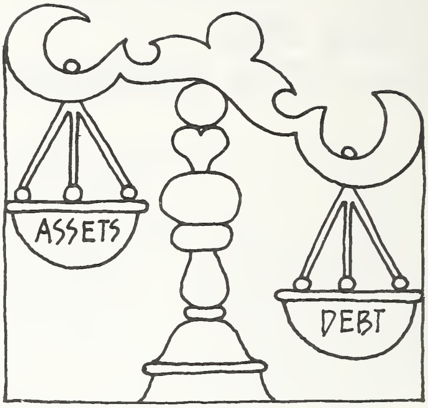
USDA's Economics, Statistics, and Cooperatives Service says that about 1.6 million people 14 years old and older earned all their 1976 wages from farmwork. An additional 1.2 million individuals had both farm and nonfarm employment that year. Their average earnings were $2,860, of which $1,651 came from farm sources.

Further analysis of data from the Hired Farm Working Force Survey of 1976 reveals that workers were predominantly young, male, and white; characteristics similar to those in previous surveys. The breakdown shows 60 percent were under 25 years of age and 75 percent were males. Whites comprised 75 percent of the group, Hispanics 11 percent, and blacks and others 14 percent.

Somewhat surprising is that the size of the hired farm labor force in 1976 was not much different than it had been a decade earlier, although during the interim the number of workers had been both above and below the 2.8 million level.

Approximately 213,000, or 8 percent of the work force, were migrants. About 63 percent traveled 200 miles or more during the year and 23 percent went 1,500 miles or more from home. Those traveling the longest distances tended to be Hispanics, blacks, and others. Migrant workers earned an average of $1,807 from farm employment.

About 38 percent of the minority farmworkers were female, compared with only 20 percent of the white workers.



DEBT UP FASTER THAN ASSETS

Almost predictably, the value of farm assets climbed higher again in 1977, reaching a record $709.8 billion as of January 1, 1978.

However, the just over 8 percent gain represents the smallest proportional increase since 1974, as the worth of both physical and financial holdings grew at a slower than usual pace.

Farm debt—excluding CCC loans outstanding at the start of the year—also rose more slowly. But a record volume of CCC loans on stored crops pushed total indebtedness to an alltime high of $119.7 billion and meant the biggest percentage rise in farm debt since 1948.

With debts growing faster than assets, farmers were unable to accumulate as much equity as in the past 2 years. On January 1, the farm sector's debt-to-asset ratio (total indebtedness divided by total assets) stood at nearly 17 percent, the highest in more than three decades, but comfortably low compared with the debt-to-asset ratios of most other industries.

Following are a few of the key factors that shaped the farm sector's current balance sheet. . .

• Farm real estate, which accounts for roughly three-fourths of all farm assets, posted the slowest gain since 1971, due mainly to discouraging income prospects during 1977.

• The value of livestock and poultry on farms climbed briskly, but outlays for new machinery and motor vehicles declined abruptly, stalling growth in nonreal estate assets. Financial assets got their biggest boost from a 9-percent rise in the net worth of farmer cooperatives.

• On the debt side, loans on farm real estate rose 1-1/2 times faster than land values, partly because farmers began refinancing certain short term loans into mortgage loans to stretch out payments.

• Outstanding nonreal estate loans rose a record 20.4 percent in 1977, spurred mainly by an unusually large volume of new loans by the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) and CCC price-support loans on stored crops. FmHA upped its nonreal estate lending by two-thirds, while CCC loans outstanding at the start of this year were 4-1/2 times the January 1977 level.

Beginning with the June 1978 issue, the *Balance Sheet of the Farming Sector*, from which this material was drawn, includes balance sheets for the 50 individual States for 1970-77. For a single free copy, write ESCS Information, Rm. 5855-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

BALANCE SHEET FOR THE AVERAGE FARM[1]

Item	1960	1970	1977	1978[2]
	Dollars			
ASSETS				
Physical assets:				
Real estate	34,610	73,172	178,805	196,202
Nonreal estate:				
Livestock and poultry	3,848	7,962	10,736	11,362
Machinery and motor vehicles	5,739	10,952	26,726	
Crops stored on and off farms[3]	1,952	3,703	8,129	9,181
Household equipment and furnishings	2,326	3,249	5,338	5,414
Financial assets:				
Deposits and currency	2,313	4,032	5,902	6,093
U.S. savings bonds	1,177	1,268	1,613	1,642
Investments in cooperatives	1,071	2,442	4,726	5,205
Total	53,036	106,780	241,975	264,502
CLAIMS				
Liabilities:				
Real estate debt	3,049	9,896	20,913	23,965
Nonreal estate debt:				
Excluding CCC loans	2,909	7,178	16,652	19,021
CCC loans[4]	294	907	374	1,675
Total liabilities	6,252	17,981	37,939	44,661
Proprietors' equities	46,784	88,799	204,036	219,841
Total	53,036	106,780	241,975	264,502

[1]Total values divided by total number of farms. [2]Preliminary. [3]All crops held on farms including crops under loan to CCC, and crops held off farms as security for CCC loans. [4]Nonrecourse CCC loans secured by crops owned by farmers. These crops are included as assets in this balance sheet.

THE FINE ART OF FIELDWORK

Corn for grain is growing on an estimated 67.7 million acres this summer and the August production forecast called for 6.5 billion bushels, with a yield of 96 bushels per acre.

Through the season the acreage figure will hold relatively steady, but yield estimates from July through harvest may fluctuate under drought stress, excessive moisture, early frost, disease, or other factors.

For example, in 1977, the July estimate was for a national yield average of 89.4 bushels per acre; a month later the level was off to 87.3; then it climbed to 90.8 for October; and closed the year with 91. The 1.6-bushel difference from the opening to the closing of the season could have meant over 112 million bushels in the total harvest.

There's little doubt of the importance of accurately tracking the yield. The Crop Reporting Board uses two basic techniques.

Much of the information for the forecasts comes from a continuing series of mail surveys in which farmers say how yield prospects are on their farms and in their localities.

To supplement this intelligence, unbiased observers from the Crop Reporting Board's offices in the 18 major corn-producing States make monthly visits during the growing season to 3,200 typical fields.

The field workers, with the farmer's permission, lay out units two rows wide and 15 feet long.

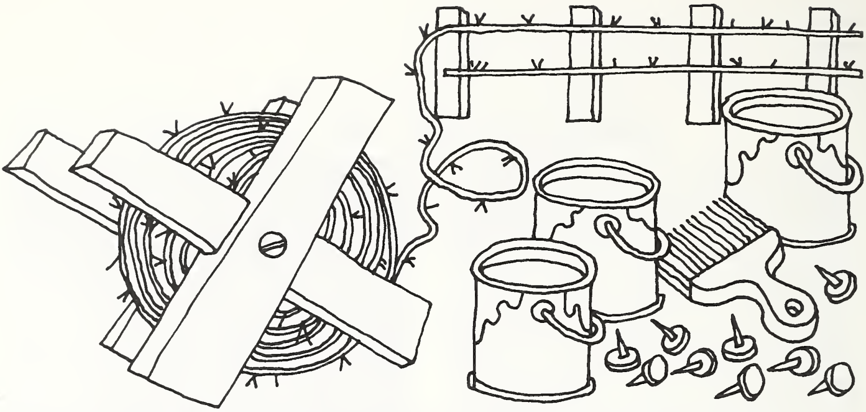
Similar data collection efforts apply to soybeans, cotton, and wheat. For soybeans, 1,900 units two rows wide and 3 feet 6 inches long are set up in 17 States. The 2,400

cotton samples in 12 States are double-row sections 10 feet long. The 2,500 wheat units measure three drill rows by 21.6 inches long and are laid out in 17 States.

The field workers measure the distance between rows and count the plants in the unit to indicate total plants per acre. Next step is to count and examine the fruit in all stages of development as a guide to yield per plant. Plant population and yield per plant point to yield per acre, which is multiplied by acres for harvest to indicate total production.

When the crop is mature, the sample plots are hand harvested by the field workers for moisture and weight determinations. Following the farmer's harvest, a final visit to the fields notes harvesting losses to guide the Crop Reporting Board in determining the net yields.

Above: Fieldworker lays out a sample soybean unit, using special metal frame.
Left: Drawing shows the frame's dimensions while map below reveals concentration of corn objective yield sites in major producing States.
Opposite page: Mature crop samples are weighed and tested for moisture in nearby laboratories.



NAILED BY RISING SUPPLY PRICES

Building and fencing materials claim only about 5 percent of farmers' annual production outlays, but prices for these materials have been rising faster than the average for all farm outputs.

USDA reports that during 1971-77, prices for building and fencing supplies jumped 89 percent—against an average of 77 percent for all other production items. The $6.1 billion spent by farmers last year on building, fencing, and improvements represented a 16-percent hike from the year before.

The Crop Reporting Board keeps track of these outlays as part of its program of surveying and reporting current prices paid for roughly 250 production items. The information, collected chiefly from dealers across the country, appears regularly in the Board's *Agricultural Prices* report.

Latest figures on building materials show that prices for 12 selected items climbed an average of 11 percent from June 1977 to June 1978. Pine 2 x 4's took the biggest leap, to $352 per 1,000 board feet, versus $289 a year earlier. Meantime, a gallon of housepaint went for $12.50, up only 3 percent from the previous June.

Prices for fencing supplies rose more moderately. For example, steel posts, at $2.33 each, had climbed only 2 cents from May 1977 to May 1978, as had fencing staples, which cost 54 cents a pound. Barbed wire bore a 1-percent larger price tag, while the charges for field and stock fencing notched gains of 6 to 7 percent.

Sixteen of the most common building and fencing products were the subject of a special survey aimed at determining typical retail margins and other marketing practices. The survey spanned some 240 lumber yards and farm supply stores.

The retail margin, or difference between dealer cost and retail price, averaged 23 percent for fencing materials and 24 percent for building supplies, though the margins ranged from a low of 20 percent for barbed wire to 32 percent for fencing staples and electrical cable. Generally, items for which there were few substitutes—like nails and staples—carried the biggest margins.

Nearly all the suppliers indicated they provided 30-day charge accounts for their customers and a third accepted bank charge cards. More than two-thirds furnished free delivery services.

Discounts—usually ranging from 6 to 10 percent—were granted to customers other than licensed contractors by around 40 percent of the retailers.

SOVIETS DUE BIG GRAIN CROP

The 1978 Russian grain crop, if nothing untoward happens to it through harvest, would substantially surpass last season's and be among the largest this decade.

USDA's Interagency Task Force on USSR Grain Situation sees the Soviets' total grain harvest in the 210-230 million metric ton range, most likely near 220 million. That's up sharply from last year's 195.5 million, and with good weather, the crop could even top the 1976 record of nearly 224 million tons.

This forecast was made in early August, several weeks after USDA's winter wheat team returned from a 3-week tour of seven important producing districts in the USSR.

The team—Gus Page, Extension Service, Oklahoma State University; Floyd Rolf, USDA's Crop Reporting Board; and James Kinder, Jr., Oklahoma wheat farmer—found adequate to surplus moisture in the Ukraine, but much drier conditions in the Volgograd and Voronezh areas.

The wheat got off to a good start last fall in the seven districts and much of the region came through a wet and cool spring and early summer. The team felt that even in the two dry districts the crop would do well though yields might be off somewhat. The seven districts normally account for 25 percent of the Soviet winter wheat crop.

During July 17 to August 4, a spring wheat team toured major producing areas, finding favorable conditions in the high-risk area extending from the Volga River eastward, where nearly all the spring wheat is grown.

Total grain area for harvest in the USSR is put at 129.5 million hectares, down slightly from 1977. Yields, however, are showing a more than 10-percent improvement because soil moisture conditions are better and rainfall has been more evenly distributed during the growing season, leading to the projected harvest of 220 million metric tons.

For all of Russia, the expectations are for 107 million metric tons of wheat from 62 million harvested hectares with an average yield of 1.7 metric tons. The harvested area matches last year and the yield could be up 0.2 metric tons.

Coarse grain production—rye, barley, oats, corn, sorghum, and millet—is expected to amount to 102 million metric tons from 60 million harvested hectares and an average yield of 1.7 metric tons. Again the area is nearly the same as in 1977, but yields are better.

CUTTING RHUBARB AND COSTS TOO

In recent years, rising costs of hand labor meant declining rhubarb acreage. But a new harvester may change that course.

After surveying growers and processors across the country, an engineer with USDA's Science and Education Administration developed the new harvester by retooling a cucumber harvester.

Field tests over the past 2 years have yielded impressive results. Using a commercially built machine based on the research model, a Michigan grower halved his harvesting costs.

The harvester offers a two-fold solution to the rhubarb decline—less hands required to work the fields and a bigger crop through more efficient production.

Studies showed 65-percent recovery on rhubarb picked by machine. It is expected that further refinements in machine design and rhubarb culture will push recovery to 75 to 85 percent.

Briefings

RECENT REPORTS BY USDA OF ECONOMIC, MARKETING, AND RESEARCH DEVELOPMENTS AFFECTING FARMERS.

FROM MINES TO MAPLES. . .Just what will grow on the refuse of a mine excavation? Over a 30-year period, USDA's Soil Conservation Service studied and field tested hundreds of native and introduced plant species for reclaiming and stabilizing surface mine areas east of the Mississippi River. The results, along with land management practices, were compiled in a booklet entitled "Plant Performance on Surface Coal Mine Spoil in Eastern United States." Single copies are available free by writing to: Publications, Soil Conservation Service, P.O. Box 2890, Washington, D.C. 20013.

MORE MINK. . .Last year mink ranchers turned out 3.1 million pelts, up 2% from 1976, and this year another gain is expected with a 4% rise in the number of bred females. According to the Crop Reporting Board, pelts were valued at $87.3 million, off slightly as the average slipped to $28.40 from $29 the year before. U.S. mink ranches increased 2% to 1,034; however, Wisconsin, where about one-third of last year's pelts were produced, saw a slight decline in operations.

GRAIN DUST EXPLOSIONS UNDER SCRUTINY. . .The conditions that lead to grain dust explosions will get increased attention from USDA's Science and Education Administration (SEA) and Kansas State University in Manhattan. More than $37,000 has been earmarked by SEA for the research program, which will cover three main areas—the likelihood of explosion from the handling of grains, the chemical and physical processes of ignition and formation of explosive waves in dust clouds, and the chemical properties of dust particles under a variety of temperatures. The cooperative research will supplement work underway at SEA's Manhattan-based Grain Marketing Research Laboratory.

FARMLAND VALUES CLIMB MORE SLOWLY. . .Farmland prices started cooling off last year after farmers adopted a wait-and-see attitude during the midyear cost-price squeeze. For the year ending February 1, 1978, farm real estate prices rose only 9%, the smallest

annual increase since 1972 and a sharp drop from the 25% gain of 1974 and 17% gain of 1977. The average price per acre amounted to $490 last February; that penciled out a price tag of $524 billion for all U.S. farmland. Prices ranged from New Jersey's $2,051 an acre to New Mexico's $93. Nebraska registered the only decline, down 4%. USDA economists forecast farmland values to rise another 6% to 10% for the year ending next February.

FOOD FOR FITNESS. . .Health food markets in Sweden and Switzerland do a brisk business—one that the U.S. hopes to tap. U.S. manufacturers and exporters of health and dietetic foods will have an opportunity to meet with tradesmen from the two countries in Zurich and Stockholm this fall. USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service will hold its first-ever dietetic and health food shows to draw attention to the U.S. as a supplier to these flourishing markets. Prospects point to $200,000 in immediate sales, and about $1 million over a year's time. Together both countries registered nearly $222 million in health food sales last year with steady growth predicted.

FOREIGNERS BUY FEWER BEEF BREEDERS. . .Last year U.S. exports of beef breeding cattle plunged to a new low of fewer than 8,000 head. Sales have fallen off steadily after peaking at 42,000 animals in 1974. Analysts place much of the blame on global recession and depressed world cattle prices. Also affecting sales were prohibitive import regulations in Mexico and devaluation of the peso, a ban on import permits in South Africa, and continuing problems stemming from Canadian specifications against bluetongue disease. However, indications point to substantially larger shipments this year based on overall improvement in the livestock sector worldwide and better economic conditions in major U.S. export markets.

TRADE REVIEW. . .During calendar 1977, the United States imported $13.5 billion worth of farm products, slightly more than double the 1972 figure, as every year except 1975 brought an increase. Meantime, U.S. farm exports nearly tripled in value to $23.7 billion last year. As a result, the U.S. agricultural trade surplus widened from $2.9 billion in 1972 to an even better level of $10.2 billion last year. In the past couple of years, however, imports climbed faster than exports, causing the surplus to slip from its 1975 peak of nearly $12.6 billion.

FEWER LAMBS AND LESS WOOL. . .That's the 1978 story from the Crop Reporting Board. Lambs numbered 8 million for the year, down 7% from 1977. A prolonged winter reduced the lambing rate to its lowest level since 1969. Major-producer Texas's poor winter grazing conditions combined with unfavorable conception rates to scale down the lamb

population. A positive note showed 1.5 million ewe lambs under a year old on hand January 1, 1978, a 6% increase. An estimated 100 million pounds of wool, grease basis, will be shorn in 1978. That's down 6% from last year, reflecting fewer sheep shorn—a projected 12.6 million head—and fleece weights averaging just below 8 pounds, compared with 8.11 in 1977.

DRY HAY WHEN THE SUN SHINES. . .Scientists with USDA and the University of Illinois soon will explore ways of using solar energy to dry large bales of hay. The one-year project, funded by the Department of Energy and administered by USDA's Science and Education Administration, represents part of a continuing effort by the two departments to develop solar systems in order to conserve dwindling supplies of fossil fuels. While hay may be baled at up to 30% moisture, the moisture level must be reduced below 20% to prevent deterioration. The scientists plan to develop equipment that will economically force sun-heated air into the dense centers of bales where drying is most difficult.

SPRING VEGETABLE VALUE CLIMBS 65%. . .The 14 major fresh market vegetables produced this spring carried a producer price tag of almost $702 million, far outdistancing the $425 million 1977 crop. The leader was lettuce, which jumped 225% in total value from $80 million to about $260 million. Other big gainers were celery, up 69%; cucumbers, up 60%; and tomatoes, cabbage, and green peppers, each up about one-third. Production amounted to 1.99 million metric tons, 2% above the year-earlier output.

MELONS ALSO MAKE ADVANCE. . .The spring melon output brought growers almost $105 million, compared with nearly $98 million in 1977. The increase in value was associated with a larger output of cantaloups and honeydews, and a decline in watermelon production.

FOCUS ON AFRICA, WEST ASIA. . .Agricultural production in both Africa and West Asia took a slight downturn in 1977. Two of Africa's three largest producers, however, posted gains: South Africa registered an 8% rise propelled by a substantially larger corn crop, while a greatly increased peanut crop helped put Nigeria on the plus side. Egypt showed a slight loss after unusually hot weather and insect damage. Among other top agricultural countries, Kenya scored the greatest improvement, up 12%, while Morocco suffered Africa's worst setback. Of the two major producers in West Asia, Turkey maintained its high level of production with a record wheat crop, and Iran slipped just below its record performance of a year earlier with a 9% drop in grain output.

Statistical Barometer

Item	1976	1977	1978—latest available data	
Agricultural Trade:				
Agricultural exports ($bil.)	23	[1]24	2.6	June
Agricultural imports ($bil.)	11	[1]13	1.1	June
Cattle Inventory, July 1:				
Cattle and calves (mil. head)	133.7	130.2	121.6	July
Cows and heifers that have calved (mil. head)	53.9	52.2	48.5	July
Beef cows (mil. head)	42.9	41.2	37.6	July
Milk cows (mil. head)	11.1	11.0	10.8	July
Heifers 500 pounds and over (mil. head)	18.9	18.4	18.1	July
For beef cow replacements (mil. head)	6.5	5.8	5.4	July
For milk cow replacements (mil. head)	3.9	4.0	3.9	July
Other heifers (mil. head)	8.5	8.5	8.8	July
Steers 500 pounds and over (mil. head)	18.7	18.7	17.8	July
Bulls 500 pounds and over (mil. head)	2.8	2.7	2.5	July
Heifers, steers, and bulls under 500 pounds (mil. head)	39.4	38.3	34.8	July
Calves born (mil. head)[2]	47.4	46.1	44.1	July
Farm Production and Efficiency:				
Farm output, total (1967=100)	117	121	120	August
Livestock (1967=100)[3]	105	106	108	August
Meat animals (1967=100)	105	105	107	August
Dairy products (1967=100)	103	105	104	August
Poultry and eggs (1967=100)	110	112	117	August
Crops (1967=100)[4]	121	129	128	August
Feed grains (1967=100)	120	124	125	August
Hay and forage (1967=100)	102	108	113	August
Food grains (1967=100)	141	131	125	August
Sugar crops (1967=100)	128	117	119	August
Cotton (1967=100)	142	195	159	August
Tobacco (1967=100)	108	98	100	August
Oil crops (1967=100)	132	171	174	August
Cropland used for crops (1967=100)	109	111	108	August
Crop production per acre (1967=100)	111	116	119	August

[1]Preliminary.
[2]For 1978, the number of calves born before July 1 plus the number expected to be born after July 1.
[3]Gross livestock production includes minor livestock products not included in the separate groups shown. It cannot be added to gross crop production to compute farm output.
[4]Gross crop production includes some miscellaneous crops not in the separate groups shown. It cannot be added to gross livestock production to compute farm output.

Crop Reporting Board

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DIANE DECKER, EDITOR

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